

36. The device of claim 28 wherein the immobilization panel is configured such that an upper surface thereof is generally planar with an upper surface of the frame when the immobilization panel is in place within the frame.

37. The device of claim 28 wherein the frame and support system are formed from non-metal components.

REMARKS

I. Introduction:

Claims 1, 6, 15, 17, 20, 26, 27, 28, 34, and 35 are amended herein. Claims 1-37 are currently pending.

Claims 6-9, 15, 17, 20, 21, 26, 27, 34, and 35 were objected to in the Office Action of October 4, 2002 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Claims 6, 15, and 17 have been amended to include the requirements of claim 1. Claims 20, 26, and 27 have been amended to include the requirements of claim 18. Claim 34 has been amended to include the requirements of claims 28 and 33. Claim 35 has been amended to include the requirements of claim 28. Accordingly, claims 6, 15, 17, 20, 26, 27, 34, and 35 are believed to be in proper form for allowance.

Claims 7-9 and 21, depending directly or indirectly from claims 6 and 20, respectively, now depend from an allowable claim and are themselves in proper form for allowance.

II. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102 and §103:

Claims 1-5, 16, 18, 19, and 25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,003,174 (Kantrowitz et al.).

Claim 1 is directed to a tabletop device for use in supporting and positioning a patient in a medical therapy or diagnostic system having a support base and operable to project a beam over at least a portion of the tabletop device. The tabletop device is configured for mounting on the support base. Claim 1 requires, among other things: a central section configured for attachment to the support base, a frame fixedly attached to the central section and extending longitudinally outward from opposite sides thereof; and a support system connected to the frame for supporting a patient thereon. At least a portion of the frame and support system is located within the beam projection area when the tabletop is mounted in the medical therapy or diagnostic system and the portion of the frame located within the beam projection area is formed substantially from non-metal components. Applicants' unique construction as set forth in claim 1, provides improved transmission in the beam projection area.

The design set forth in claim 1 is not anticipated by the prior art of record, including Kantrowitz et al. The Kantrowitz et al. patent discloses a radiolucent table extension. The extension 26 is configured to support the upper torso and head of a patient. As shown in Figs. 1 and 2, table extension 26 extends from only one end of an operating table. Kantrowitz et al. do not disclose a frame attached to a central section of a tabletop and extending longitudinally outward from opposite sides of the central section, as set forth in claim 1. Applicants' design is particularly advantageous in that both ends of the tabletop may be used for imaging.

Accordingly, claim 1 is submitted as patentable over Kantrowitz et al. and the other prior art of record.

Claims 2-5, 7-14, and 16, depending either directly or indirectly from claim 1, are submitted to be allowable for the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim 18 is directed to a system for use in medical therapy or imaging. The tabletop comprises, among other things: a central section configured for attachment to the support base; a frame fixedly attached to the central section and extending longitudinally outward from opposite ends thereof; and a support system connected to the frame for supporting a patient thereon. Claim 18 is submitted as patentable for the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1.

Claims 19 and 22-25, depending either directly or indirectly from claim 18, are submitted as patentable for the same reasons as claim 18.

Claims 28-33 and 36-37 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,868,103 (Pageot et al.).

Claim 28 is directed to a tabletop device comprising: a central section configured for attachment to a support base; a frame fixedly attached to the central section and extending longitudinally outward from opposite sides thereof; and a support system integrally mounted within the frame. The support system includes immobilization panels configured for immobilizing portions of a patient's body on the tabletop.

Pageot et al. describe a surgical examination table structure. The table includes a plurality of panels each movable relative to the other panels, as shown in Figs. 2-11. In contrast, applicants' tabletop as set forth in claim 28 includes a frame fixedly attached to a central section and extending longitudinally outward from opposite sides thereof.

Accordingly, claim 28 is submitted as not anticipated by Pageot et al. and the other prior art of record.

Claims 29-33 and 36-37, depending directly from claim 28, are submitted as patentable for the same reasons as claim 28.

The additional references cited, including U.S. Patent No. 5,537,454 (Korver, II) do not remedy the deficiencies of the primary reference.

III. Conclusion:

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-37 are respectfully requested.

If any fees are due in connection with the filing of this amendment, the Commissioner is authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account 19-2179 (Order No. 00P07786US).

Respectfully submitted,



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**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES
MADE TO THE APPLICATION**

In the Claims:

Claims 1, 6, 15, 17, 20, 26, 27, 28, 34, and 35 are amended as follows:

1. (Amended) A tabletop device for use in supporting and positioning a patient in a medical therapy or diagnostic system having a support base and operable to project a beam over at least a portion of the tabletop device, the tabletop device being configured for mounting [mounted] on the support base, the tabletop device comprising:

a central section configured for attachment to the support base, the central section positioned such that it is outside of a beam projection area when the tabletop is mounted in the medical therapy or diagnostic system;

a frame fixedly attached to the central section and extending longitudinally outward from opposite sides thereof; and

a support system connected to the frame for supporting a patient thereon;

wherein at least a portion of the frame and support system is located within the beam projection area when the tabletop device is mounted in the medical therapy or diagnostic system and wherein the portion of the frame located within the beam projection area is formed substantially from non-metal components.

6. (Amended) [The device of claim 5 wherein the frame comprises tubular members]A tabletop device for use in supporting and positioning a patient in a medical therapy or diagnostic system having a support base and operable to project a

beam over at least a portion of the tabletop device, the tabletop device being configured for mounting on the support base, the tabletop device comprising:

a central section configured for attachment to the support base, the central section positioned such that it is outside of a beam projection area when the tabletop is mounted in the medical therapy or diagnostic system;

a frame fixedly attached to the central section and extending longitudinally outward from opposite sides thereof, the frame being formed of composite tubular members; and

a support system connected to the frame for supporting a patient thereon;

wherein at least a portion of the frame and support system is located within the beam projection area when the tabletop device is mounted in the medical therapy or diagnostic system and wherein the portion of the frame located within the beam projection area is formed substantially from non-metal components.

15. (Amended) [The device of claim 10 wherein]A tabletop device for use in supporting and positioning a patient in a medical therapy or diagnostic system having a support base and operable to project a beam over at least a portion of the tabletop device, the tabletop device being configured for mounting on the support base, the tabletop device comprising:

a central section configured for attachment to the support base, the central section positioned such that it is outside of a beam projection area when the tabletop is mounted in the medical therapy or diagnostic system;

a frame fixedly attached to the central section and extending longitudinally outward from opposite sides thereof; and

a support system connected to the frame for supporting a patient thereon, the support system [comprises] comprising a multi-layer composite member which varies longitudinally in thickness to reduce beam interference in select areas;

wherein at least a portion of the frame and support system is located within the beam projection area when the tabletop device is mounted in the medical therapy or diagnostic system and wherein the portion of the frame located within the beam projection area is formed substantially from non-metal components.

17. (Amended) [The device of claim 1 further comprising]A tabletop device for use in supporting and positioning a patient in a medical therapy or diagnostic system having a support base and operable to project a beam over at least a portion of the tabletop device, the tabletop device being configured for mounting on the support base, the tabletop comprising:

a central section configured for attachment to the support base, the central section positioned such that it is outside of a beam projection area when the tabletop is mounted in the medical therapy or diagnostic system;

a frame fixedly attached to the central section and extending longitudinally outward from opposite sides thereof;

an accessory rail pivotably mounted about a central axis extending generally perpendicular to the frame such that the rail can be positioned to extend along one of the edges of the frame extending from the central section of the frame; and

a support system connected to the frame for supporting a patient thereon;

wherein at least a portion of the frame and support system is located within the beam projection area when the tabletop device is mounted in the medical therapy or diagnostic system and wherein the portion of the frame located within the beam projection area is formed substantially from non-metal components.

20. (Amended) [The system of claim 18 wherein]A system for use in medical therapy or imaging, the system comprising a base, a tabletop mounted on the base for supporting a patient, a beam projection device operable to project a beam over at least a portion of the table, the tabletop comprising:

a central section configured for attachment to the support base, the central section positioned such that it is removed from a beam projection area when the tabletop is mounted in the medical therapy or imaging system;

a frame fixedly attached to the central section and extending longitudinally outward from opposite ends thereof, the frame [comprises] comprising tubular members formed from a composite material; and

a support system connected to the frame for supporting a patient thereon;

wherein at least a portion of the frame and support system is located within the beam projection area when the tabletop is mounted in the medical therapy or imaging system and wherein the portion of the frame located within the beam projection area is formed from non-metal components.

26. (Amended) [The device of claim 18 further comprising]A system for use in medical therapy or imaging, the system comprising a base, a tabletop mounted on the base for supporting a patient, a beam projection device operable to project a beam over at least a portion of the table, the tabletop comprising:

a central section configured for attachment to the support base, the central section positioned such that it is removed from a beam projection area when the tabletop is mounted in the medical therapy or imaging system;

a frame fixedly attached to the central section and extending longitudinally outward from opposite ends thereof;

an accessory rail pivotably mounted about a central axis extending generally perpendicular to the frame such that the rail can be positioned to extend along one edge of the frame extending from the central section of the frame; and

a support system connected to the frame for supporting a patient thereon;

wherein at least a portion of the frame and support system is located within the beam projection area when the tabletop is mounted in the medical therapy or imaging system and wherein the portion of the frame located within the beam projection area is formed from non-metal components.

27. (Amended) [The system of claim 17 wherein]A system for use in medical therapy or imaging, the system comprising a base, a tabletop mounted on the base for supporting a patient, a beam projection device operable to project a beam over at least a portion of the table, the tabletop comprising:

a central section configured for attachment to the support base, the central section positioned such that it is removed from a beam projection area when the tabletop is mounted in the medical therapy or imaging system;

a frame fixedly attached to the central section and extending longitudinally outward from opposite ends thereof; and

a support system connected to the frame for supporting a patient thereon, the support system [comprises] comprising a plurality of integrated immobilization devices;

wherein at least a portion of the frame and support system is located within the beam projection area when the tabletop is mounted in the medical therapy or imaging system and wherein the portion of the frame located within the beam projection area is formed from non-metal components.

28. (Amended) A tabletop device for use in supporting and positioning a patient in a medical therapy or diagnostic system having a support base, the tabletop device being configured for mounting [mounted] on the support base, the tabletop device comprising:

a central section configured for attachment to the support base,

a frame fixedly attached to the central section and extending longitudinally outward from opposite sides thereof; and

a support system integrally mounted within the frame, the support system comprising immobilization panels configured for immobilizing portions of a patient's body on the tabletop device.

34. (Amended) [The device of claim 33 wherein the quick release device is] A tabletop device for use in supporting and positioning a patient in a medical therapy or diagnostic system having a support base, the tabletop device being configured for mounting on the support base, the tabletop device comprising:

a central section configured for attachment to the support base,

a frame fixedly attached to the central section and extending longitudinally outward from opposite sides thereof; and

a support system integrally mounted within the frame, the support system comprising immobilization panels configured for immobilizing portions of a patient's body on the tabletop device;

wherein the immobilization panel is attached to the frame with a spring loaded pin.

35. (Amended) [The device of claim 28 wherein]A tabletop device for use in supporting and positioning a patient in a medical therapy or diagnostic system having a support base, the tabletop device being configured for mounting on the support base, the tabletop device comprising:

a central section configured for attachment to the support base,

a frame fixedly attached to the central section and extending longitudinally outward from opposite sides thereof; the frame [includes] comprising a plurality of members extending at least partially around a periphery thereof, the members having a lip on an internal edge thereof for receiving the immobilization panel; and

a support system integrally mounted within the frame, the support system comprising immobilization panels configured for immobilizing portions of a patient's body on the tabletop device.